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Letter from Anne Whitney, Paris, France, to Sarah Whitney, 1875 June 8

Anne Whitney

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Paris June 8 - Tuesday. 75

Dear Friends all.

In a day or two after my arrival here your letter dear Sarah followed me from Florence - letter with post-mark 18th - One letter has thus far missed - & whatever papers have been sent have in all probability been absorbed by Mayney & Hooking's reading-room - wh. if noticed was & is well supplied - not one has reached me - & here in reply to your question as to whether ^{or} paper you shall send me - let me say, send none - I mean take no paper for me until I am settled in winter quarters - in the mean while I will think what I sh^d like to have. Your letter to A. B. had arrived a little while before me & contained the first information of poor Emily's affliction - It must have been a pretty severe seizure - I hope no too lasty exposure has provoked a relapse - & that she is now as sound as before or more so - I am amused at Emily's comment upon Sarah's

critical responsibility - & am
sure she hit the nail upon the
head there.

I found I did when she
went on my departure for Florence
in a dirty & most uncomfortable
house in the business part of the
city. We are much better placed
here at 9 Rue de l'Université.
paying no more for the room, one
large room than she paid for one
small room - & having when we
desire it - our meals sent up to
the chamber. Breakfast & supper
are here in this way - there is
no common or dining room in the
house - & dinner we take at a
restaurant. The dining at a place
near her school wh. is a long way
from here & it at one nearer home.
We are on the other side of the
river from that or wh. we have
been in previous visits - & are well
placed for a brief stay to get what
is to be had here in the way of help
or study. Within 3 minutes walk
is the palace of the Beaux Arts
where besides the long ranges of
plaster copies of the best sculptures
in the world - & modern achievements
in the various fine arts wh. are

of no great importance since they
are kept under lock & key & only
opened on a fee - There are special
exhibitions - as now - taken in the
case of Bonnot's paintings one of the
best esteemed French landscape artists
~~who~~ lately died. On the other side
the river - a minutes walk from
the latter stand the Louvre - thro
the galleries of wh. you cannot
even walk - without any tiring of
the eyes - & left you stop brief
occasionally - in my lonely way -
denies thro this illuminated wil-
derness - I have been settling to the
conclusion that the Louvre is with-
out a peer. Then to the west
of us but further off - a rapid
20 minutes - is the Palais de l'Industrie
otherwise the Salon. The regular
yearly exposition of acres of art
work. In a long morning spent
there I had only time to look thro
the sculpture. I despair of doing
anything with the painting. In what
I have seen I am struck, everybody
is struck with the amazing talent
of the French - an aggressive
talent wh. astonishes without pleasing

or w^h. pleases but seldom. Their
knowledge & mastery of technique
are a splendid possession. But
they show up at the same time
a painful inadequacy of aim
& idea. A second review may
correct the first impression but
there are only 3 sculptures that
remain on my mind as having much
meaning. The powerful things want
thought the thoughtful works want
power - but it is the place to learn
the alphabet & grammar of Art.
At least - so it seems now.

Mr. Brown (Appleton) Boston Land-
scape painter is occupying the
rooms next to ours - his wife is
from N. Y. & related to the Porters.
They leave this week. At the
Beaux Arts I met two Roman
artists Tilton & Graham ^{from} whom
I heard of meeting there. We
are looking for her. Long our
old friend Miss Remick who
will pass a few days here en her
way to London. Yesterday Mary
Whitwell & husband called. They
will be here all this month. will
return in Aug. This is the point
at wh. all roads converge. Yes.
Paris is the great beautiful center

of the world - & here one meets
a great many friends - The thing
that is mainly necessary to comfort
is some means of locomotion other
than one's own boots - I get very
tired with my walking sometimes.
There are omnibuses but they
are generally full. & for many
wait at the stations a half hour
bef. for my get one in a much
traveller's direction - Carriages
are to be had at 2 frs. the
hour & four boys to the driver.
of a few sons - If the latter
be not forth coming - the driver
will howl after you like a cur
whose tail has been trodden on -
We did not at first understand
the custom in this respect &
having circumspectly paid up to
the amt. of the tariff thought we
had done the whole duty of women.
but we were given to understand
in no over - delicate manner that
we were under a mistake. - Remem-
ber - I pray you. When we arrive
at specie payments I shall feel
much richer. The present state
of things affects one like a Chamber
screw. The worst feature of wh.

must have been the constant apprehension of the victim of another turn. Mr. Manning writes that the ~~present~~ condition of affairs at home must bring back great many travellers this summer.

The weather is more changeable here than in Florence more like that of home. It is now decidedly cool. our health good. Ada gone most of the day - her school being a good way off. I have delicious Strawberries & they are not dear. Also Cherries & summer vegetables flourish in the windows - at the restaurants they appear under marvellous transformations. The bill of fare is a decidedly hard nut to crack. I ponder over it - for some time. (it is in very cramped chirography too) & then have considerable private conversation with the waiter bef. I launch my bark upon that unknown sea. It is good to hear of the general good health - but you say nothing of Katie - I imagine was fearing she was far from well - I trust she is mistaken - Love to mother & all -

I send love & thanks many - for the letter